

State and Federal Migratory Game Bird Restrictions

Migratory game birds include ducks, geese, brant, rails, coots, gallinules, woodcock and snipe. The restrictions which apply include all those listed in the general hunting regulations (separate pamphlet) plus the following:

All rules below are both State (S) and Federal (F) unless specifically noted.

- **Dual violation:** Violation of state migratory bird regulations is also a violation of federal regulations.
- **Caution:** More restrictive regulations may apply to National Wildlife Refuges open to public hunting. For additional information on federal regulations, contact U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Regional Migratory Bird Coordinator, Federal Building, Fort Snelling, Twin Cities, MN 55111. Telephone: (612) 725-3313. It is the **hunter's** responsibility to know what rules apply.

While pursuing migratory game birds, it is illegal to hunt:

- **Hours:** Hunt before or after established hunting hours.
- **Closed season:** Take migratory game birds during the closed season.
- **Daily bag limits:** Take, in any one day, more than one daily bag limit.

Methods Restrictions

1. Open Water (S)

“Open water” means any water beyond a natural growth of vegetation rooted to the bottom and extending above the water surface of such height as to offer whole or partial concealment to the hunter. Dead stumps and dead trees in the water do not constitute a natural growth of vegetation.

- **Open Water Hunting:** No person may hunt waterfowl in open water from any blind which may include any boat, canoe, raft, contrivance, or similar device except: on Big Green Lake and the Great Lakes if beyond 500 feet of the shoreline (blinds need not be anchored) or 1000 feet of any lake or island shoreline on Lake Winnebago (blinds must be anchored).

Note: You may hunt in any open water area provided you are standing on the bottom without the aid of a blind. Blinds mean any securely anchored boat, canoe, raft or similar device. All open water blinds shall be removed at the close of hunting hours each day.

- **Jump Shooting:** The open water restrictions are not intended to prohibit legal jump shooting activities. It is legal to hunt by boat in streams. However, on larger bodies of water, the hunter must keep a portion of the boat in

natural vegetation. Skirting the edge of rivers and lakes in this manner is considered legal.

2. Structures, Boats and Vehicles

While pursuing migratory game birds, it is illegal to:

- **Structures (S):** Hunt from any pier, dam, dock, breakwater or similar artificial structure. Class A disabled hunting permit holders are exempted.
- **Sink box:** Hunt from a sink box (a low floating device, having a depression affording the hunter a means of concealment beneath the surface of the water).
- **Waterfowl blinds (S):** Establish a waterfowl blind on state property, including the bed of any navigable lake, prior to 7 days before the waterfowl season or leave it established beyond 7 days after the close of the waterfowl season. Any blind left on state property during the season must permanently bear the name (in lettering one-inch square or larger) of the person who constructed the blind.
- **Moving boats:** Hunt from any *moving* boat *not* in open water unless it is propelled by paddle, oars or pole. Motorboats and sailboats must have their motors completely shut off and/or the sail furled before loading and shooting.
- **Vehicle use:** Take migratory game birds from, or with the aid or use of, any vehicle except by qualified disabled persons under DNR permit.

3. Devices

While pursuing migratory game birds, it is illegal to:

- **Decoys:** Hunt with decoys which are:
 1. Placed beyond 200 feet from the cover in which the hunter is located (S).
 2. Placed in the water prior to one hour before the opening of waterfowl hunting time (S).
 3. Left in the water more than 20 minutes after the close of waterfowl hunting time (S).
 4. Left in the water unattended. *Note: You may leave decoys unattended on dry land (S).*
 5. Live, regardless of distance from the hunter. It is also illegal to hunt with the aid of or use of live decoys.

All live, tame, or captive ducks and geese shall be removed for a period of 10 consecutive days prior to hunting, and confined within an enclosure which substantially reduces the audibility of their calls and totally conceals such birds from the sight of migratory waterfowl.

- **Bird calls:** Use records or tapes of migratory bird calls or sounds or electronically amplified imitations of bird calls.
- **Baiting:** Hunt on or over a baited area or by the aid of baiting (placing feed such as corn, wheat, salt or other feed to constitute a lure or enticement). Hunters should be aware that a baited area is considered to be baited for 10 days after the removal of the bait, and it is not necessary for the hunter to know an area is baited to be in violation.
- **Hazing:** Use in any manner any air, water, or motor-driven land conveyance for the purposes of concentrating, driving, rallying, or stirring up any migratory game bird to put them in the range of hunters.

4. Guns and Ammunition

While pursuing migratory game birds, it is illegal to:

- **Shotguns:** Hunt with anything other than a shotgun fired from the shoulder, bow and arrow, or by falconry. Persons possessing Class A disabled or crossbow hunting permits may use a crossbow. Taking with a trap, snare, net, rifle, pistol, swivel gun, shotgun larger than 10 gauge, punt gun, battery gun, machine gun, fishhook, poison, drug, explosive, or stupefying substance is illegal.
 - **Shotgun capacity:** Hunt with a shotgun capable of holding more than three shells, unless it is plugged with a one-piece filler which is incapable of removal without disassembling the gun.
 - **Shot type:** Hunt with any type of lead shot when hunting waterfowl, coots and gallinules. Any shot used must be nontoxic (defined below). This means muzzleloaders must also use nontoxic shot. Only nontoxic sizes BB, BBB, T, or smaller are legal. Size F shot is illegal in Wisconsin. In addition, no person may possess any shotshell loaded with shot material other than nontoxic shot when hunting waterfowl, coots or gallinules.
- Nontoxic shot means bismuth-tin shot in a mixture of 97-3% respectively, steel shot and copper or nickel plated steel shot with plating not exceeding .0002 inches or 1% or less of shot by weight.
- **Weapons transport (S):** Carry in or on a motor-driven boat while the motor is running, any firearm or bow unless such firearm is unloaded and such bow is unstrung or enclosed within a carrying case.
 - **Notice:** Non-toxic shot will be required for all shotgun hunting, except wild turkey, on all Federally owned Waterfowl Production Areas (WPA).

